

INK AND ECHOES:

THE DEVELOPMENT OF TIBETAN YOUTH IDENTITY THROUGH READING AND STORYTELLING IN DHARAMSALA SCHOOLS AND LIBRARIES

Des Dannenbring, MLISc Candidate/ MEd Candidate

Data

Below shows the results for the cultural storytime sessions.

Story	# of Students	Avg. Age	Avg. Story Rank (10 pts.)
“Small Lie” from <i>Arabian Nights</i>	21	10.5	9.57
<i>Dreamseekers</i> (Tibetan origin)	21	8.5	9.52
<i>Pele the Fire Goddess</i>	23	10.4	8.52

Results

- Students seemed to identify slightly less with the Hawaiian story, likely because of lack of cultural exposure.
- Educators noted need for increased publication/ quality of Tibetan children’s books.
- Reading habit has increased with each generation since the occupation of Tibet.
- There exists a need for Tibetan institutes of higher learning.
- Diaspora continues to affect Tibetan identity.
- Storytelling formats are shifting from oral to written form.



Introduction

In the aftermath of the occupation of Tibet, schools were established in exile for young Tibetans to express and freely learn about their cultural heritage. This study’s purpose is to examine the relationship between Tibetan youth identity and children’s literature through the lens of libraries and education, and it consists of two parts:

- 20 interviews with Tibetan teachers, librarians, and educators.
- 3 cultural storytime sessions with TCV students, aged 8-12, where students listened to and ranked a story out of 10 points and answered a survey about reading habits and demographics.

Special thanks to Dr. Isabelle Onians, Nazneen Zafaar and Hubert Decler, Tenzin “Tenchoe” Choezom, Patrick Dowd, Phurwa Dhondup, Rinzi Sherpa, Tenzin Youdon, Dr. Rebecca Knuth, Ryan S. James, Keali’ikauila Niheu, Cynthia Font, Rinchen Hanley, Pasang-La, Sonam-La, Dhondup Gyalpo, Mr. Namdrol Tashi, Dr. Andrew Wertheimer, my 19 SIT classmates, my homestay family in Kathmandu, and my biological family in California.

Contact Information:

Des Dannenbring
dann9311@hawaii.edu

